

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently Amended) A treatment device which is used together with an endoscope to perform treatment in a body by being operated outside the body, comprising:

a needle which is used to puncture a living tissue and to which a thread for suturing the tissue is fixed;

a recovery member capable of recovering the needle inserted into the tissue, the recovery member having an outer periphery portion at which a groove is provided, and an inner hole;

a guide formed in an elongated shape and capable of guiding the recovery member;

an elongated circular member capable of being inserted into the guide; and

at least one arm provided at a distal end of the elongated circular member,

~~the recovery member being engaged with the elongated circular member when the arm and the groove are located in the guide~~ the groove having an annular form, and being engageable with the at least one arm at a plurality of points, wherein when the groove and the at least one arm are located in the guide, the recovery member and the elongated circular member keeps an engagement with each other.

18. (Withdrawn) A treatment device which is used together with an endoscope to perform treatment in a body by being operated outside the body, comprising:

a recovery member capable of recovering a needle punctured into a tissue, the recovery member having an outer periphery portion at which a protrusion is formed;

a guide formed in an elongated shape and having an inner hole, the guide being capable of guiding the recovery member;

circular members, having a distal end portion at which a groove has been provided, capable of being inserted into the guide; and

another elongated circular member capable of being inserted into the circular member,

wherein, when the protrusion and the groove are engaged with each other, the recovery member and the circular members can be integrally advanced and retracted, and

the elongated circular member and the circular members can be separated from each other.

19. (Withdrawn) A treatment device which is used together with an endoscope to perform treatment in a body by being operated outside the body, comprising:

a transmission member with a flexible structure which has a distal end portion inserted into a body and is capable of being operated outside of the body;

a push rod coupled to the distal end portion of the transmission member;

first and second connecting members coupled to the push rod, each of the first and second connecting members having a distal end portion and a proximal end portion rotatably coupled to the push rod;

first and second arm members each having a distal end portion and a proximal end portion rotatably coupled to the distal end portion of a corresponding one of the first and second connecting members;

a holding member which rotatably holds the distal end portions of the first and second arm members;

first and second actuating members which are integrally formed with the distal end portions of the first and second arm members and are able to open/close when the transmission member actuates the first and second connecting members and the first and second arm members through the push rod;

a needle which is mounted at least at one of the first and second actuating members and is used to puncture a tissue;

a thread mounted on the needle; and

a recovery member capable of recovering the needle,

wherein one of the first and second actuating members has a loop portion, and the recovery member can pass through the loop.

20. (Withdrawn) A treatment device which is used together with an endoscope to perform treatment in a body by being operated outside the body, comprising:

a transmission member with a flexible structure which has a distal end portion inserted into a body and is capable of being operated outside of the body;

a push rod coupled to the distal end portion of the transmission member;

first and second connecting members coupled to the push rod, each of the first and second connecting members having a distal end portion and a proximal end portion rotatably coupled to the push rod;

first and second arm members each having a distal end portion and a proximal end portion rotatably coupled to the distal end portion of a corresponding one of the first and second connecting members;

a holding member which rotatably holds the distal end portions of the first and second arm members;

first and second actuating members which are integrally formed with the distal end portions of the first and second arm members and are able to open/close when the transmission member actuates the first and second connecting members and the first and second arm members through the push rod;

a needle which is mounted at least at one of the first and second actuating members and is used to puncture a tissue;

a thread mounted on the needle;

a recovery member capable of recovering the needle; and

an operating member having a cylindrical outer periphery portion at which a groove has been formed and a central axis,

wherein the operating member can operate the recovery member via the groove when the operating member rotates around the central axis.

21. (Withdrawn) A suturing method using an endoscopic suturing device, comprising:

- (1) retaining an insert assisting device into a body;
- (2) inserting a suturing device incorporated in the endoscope into the insert assisting device and inserting the suturing device into the body;
- (3) opening a curved needle of the suturing device;
- (4) pushing the curved needle against a sutured region;
- (5) puncturing the curved needle into a tissue;
- (6) recovering the needle by using a recovery member;
- (7) removing the curved needle from the tissue;
- (8) moving the recovery member close to the sutured region; and

(9) returning the recovery member to a predetermined position, and removing the suturing device to the outside of the body by closing the curved needle.

22. (Previously Presented) A treatment device according to claim 17, wherein the arm is made of an elastic member.

23. (Previously Presented) A treatment device according to claim 17, wherein the arm is made of an elastic metal.

24. (Previously Presented) A treatment device according to claim 17, wherein the at least one arm comprises two arms provided at positions facing each other.

25. (New) A treatment device according to claim 17, wherein the elongated circular member has an expansion proof member which is formed of at least one wire along the elongated circular member so as to prevent expansion.